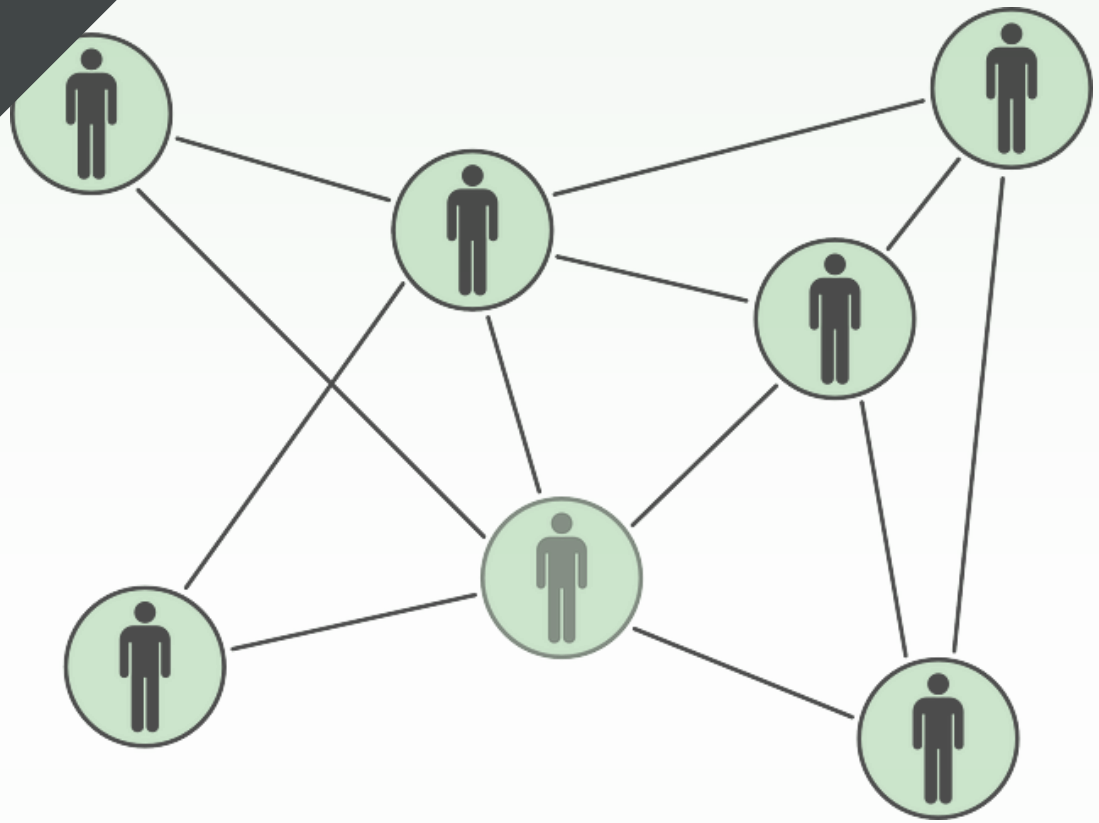


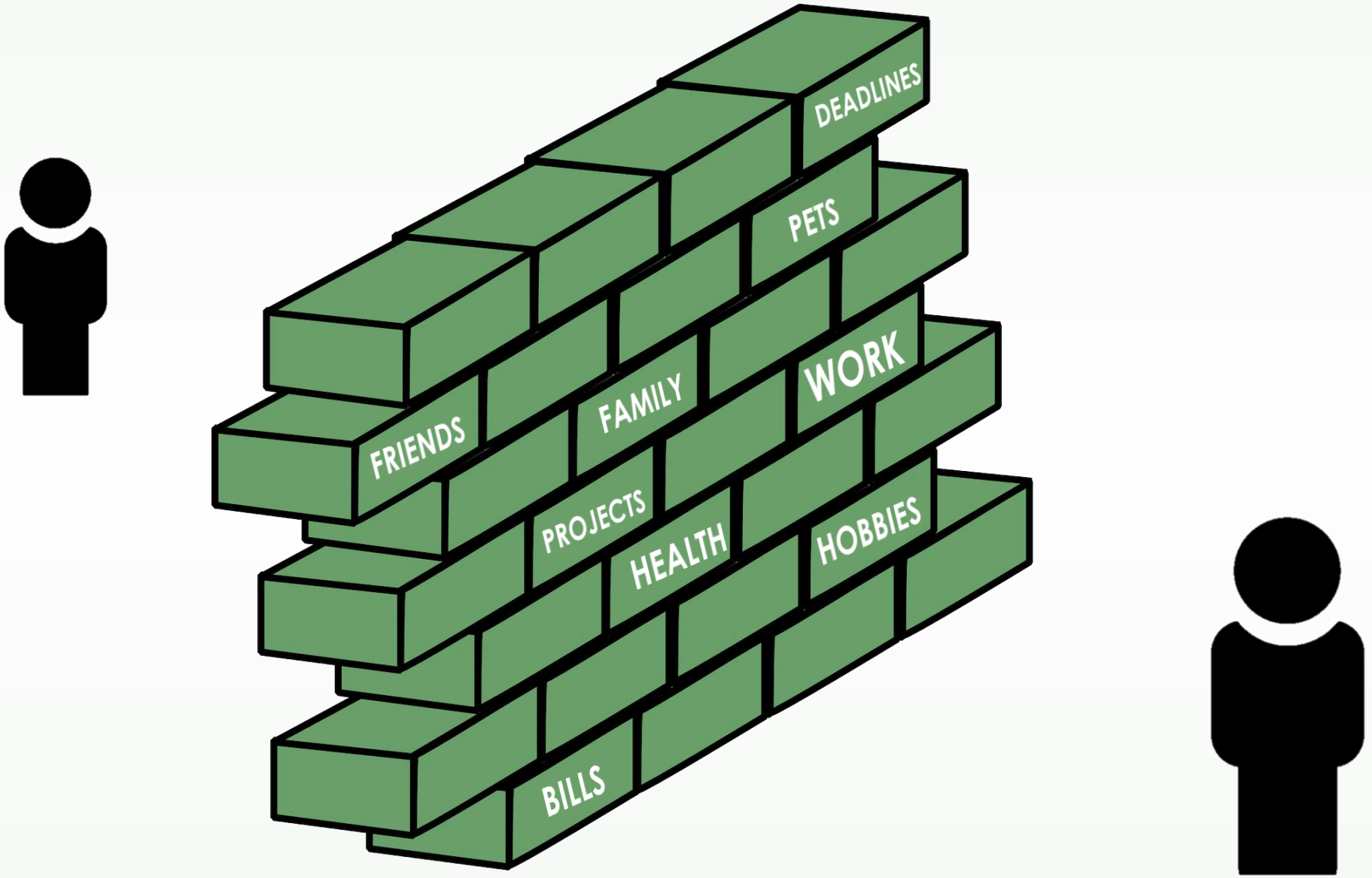
Cornerstones of Connection: Building Your Outreach Plan

Laura Meyer, VP of Creative Strategy

Iowa Watershed Academy – May 2023

CREATIVE STRATEGIES

So, where are you from in Michigan?


DEADLINES
PETS
FRIENDS
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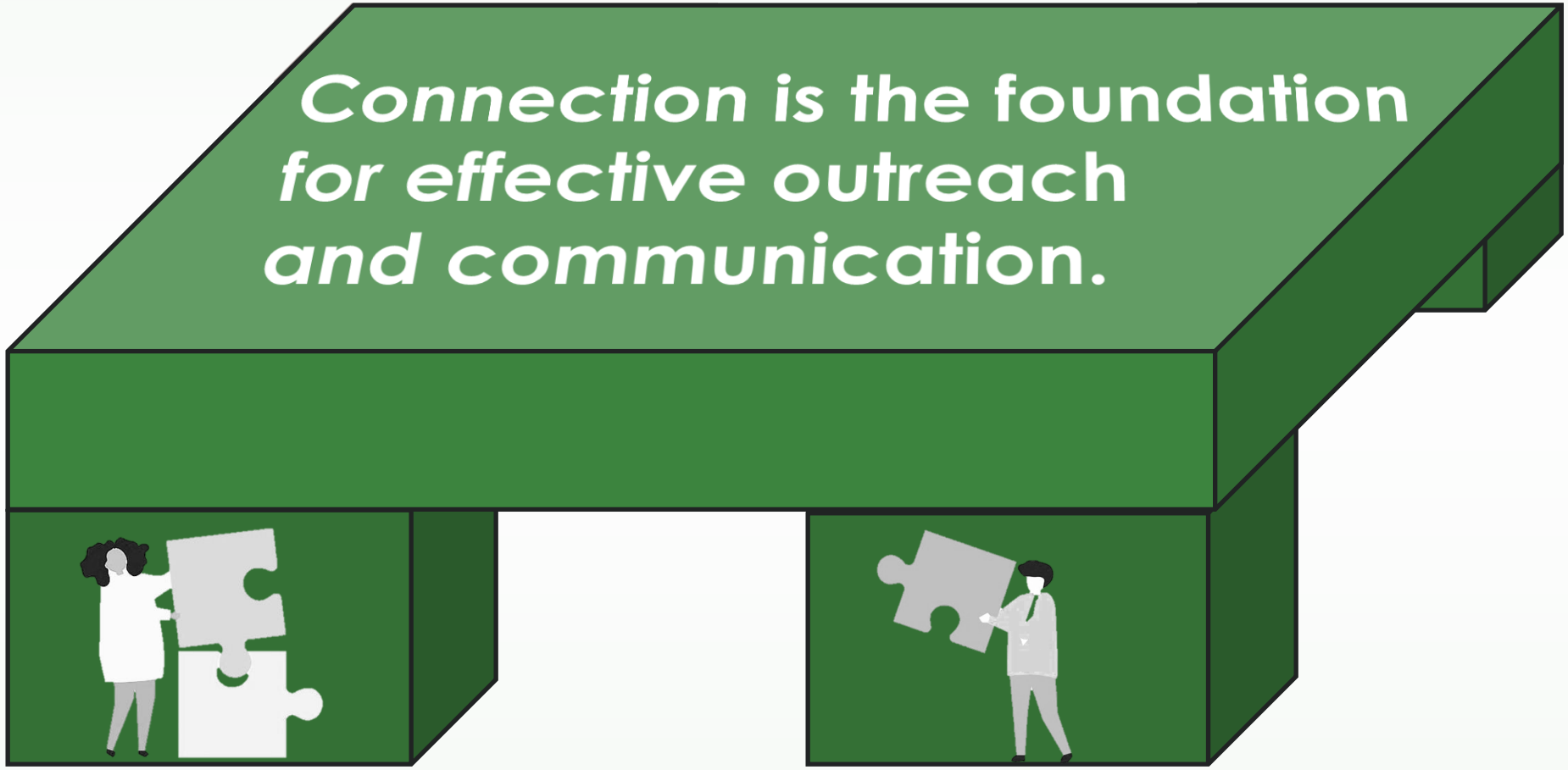
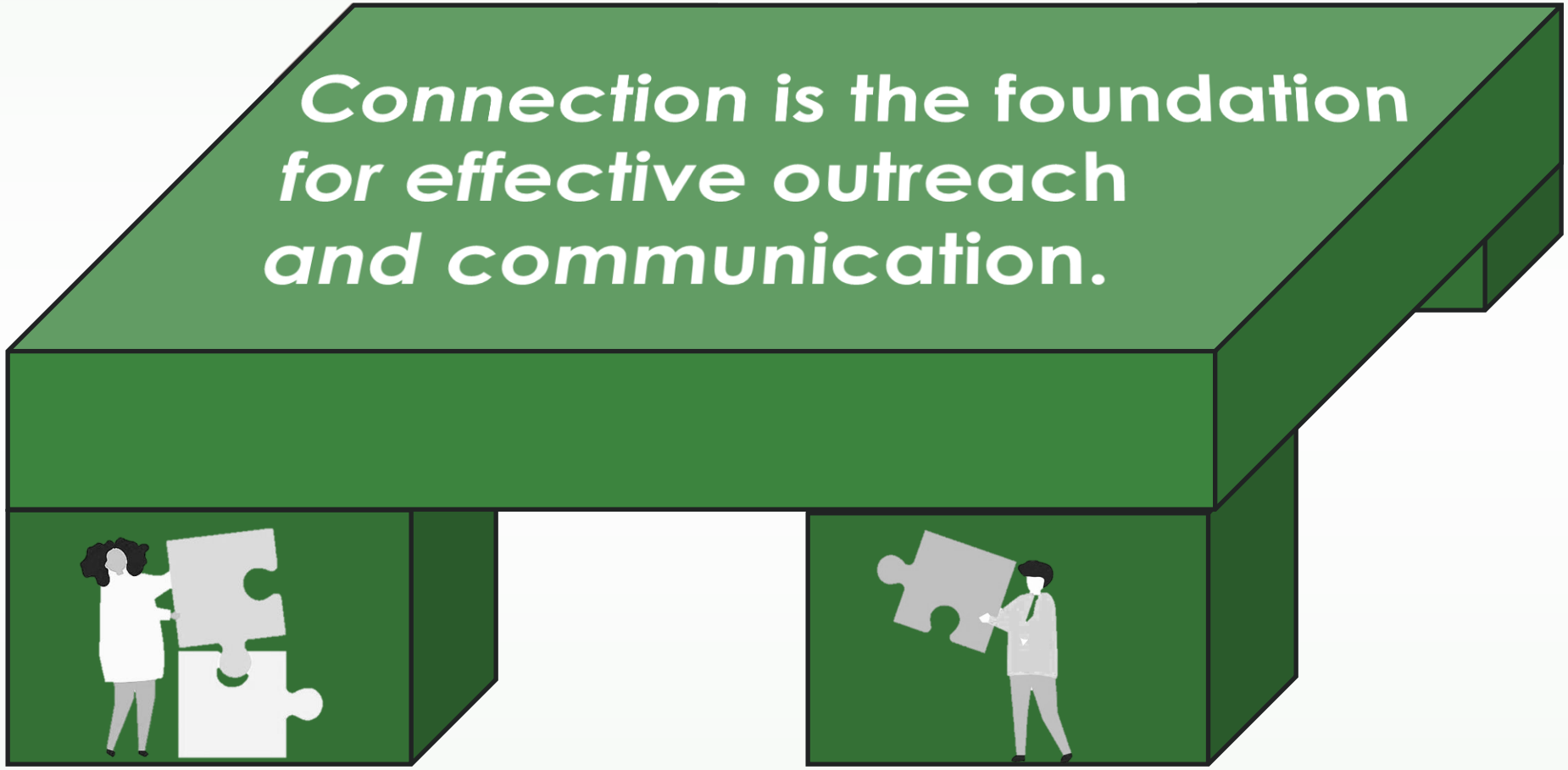
WORK
PROJECTS
HEALTH
HOBBIES
BILLS


Connection is the foundation
for effective outreach
and communication.

WHAT WE'RE DOING TODAY:

- Learn concise, four-part strategy to build connection-based outreach plans
- **Breakout Group Activity** – Practice using outreach plan to develop connection-based pitch/messaging about watershed projects
- Questions / discussion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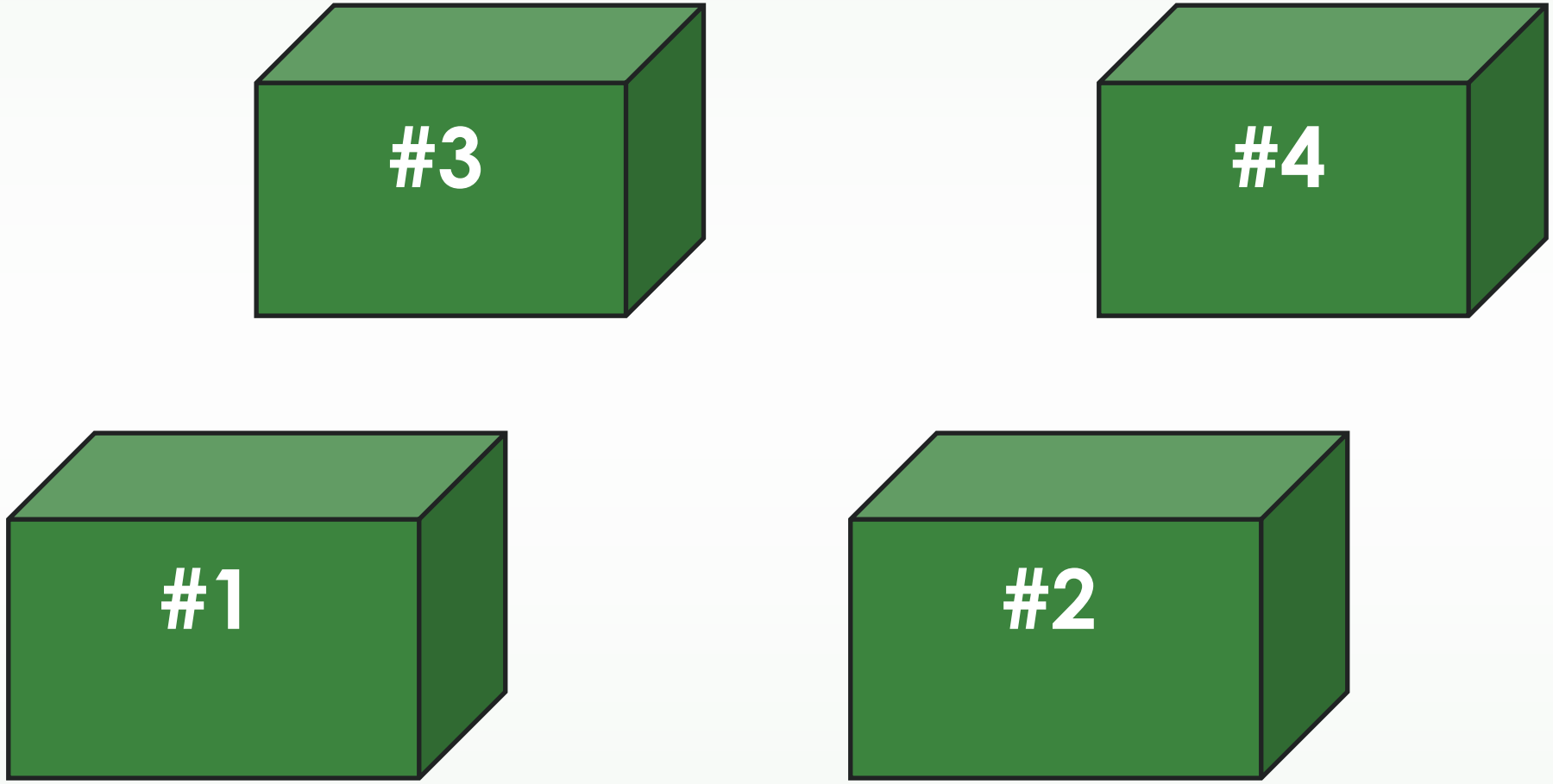
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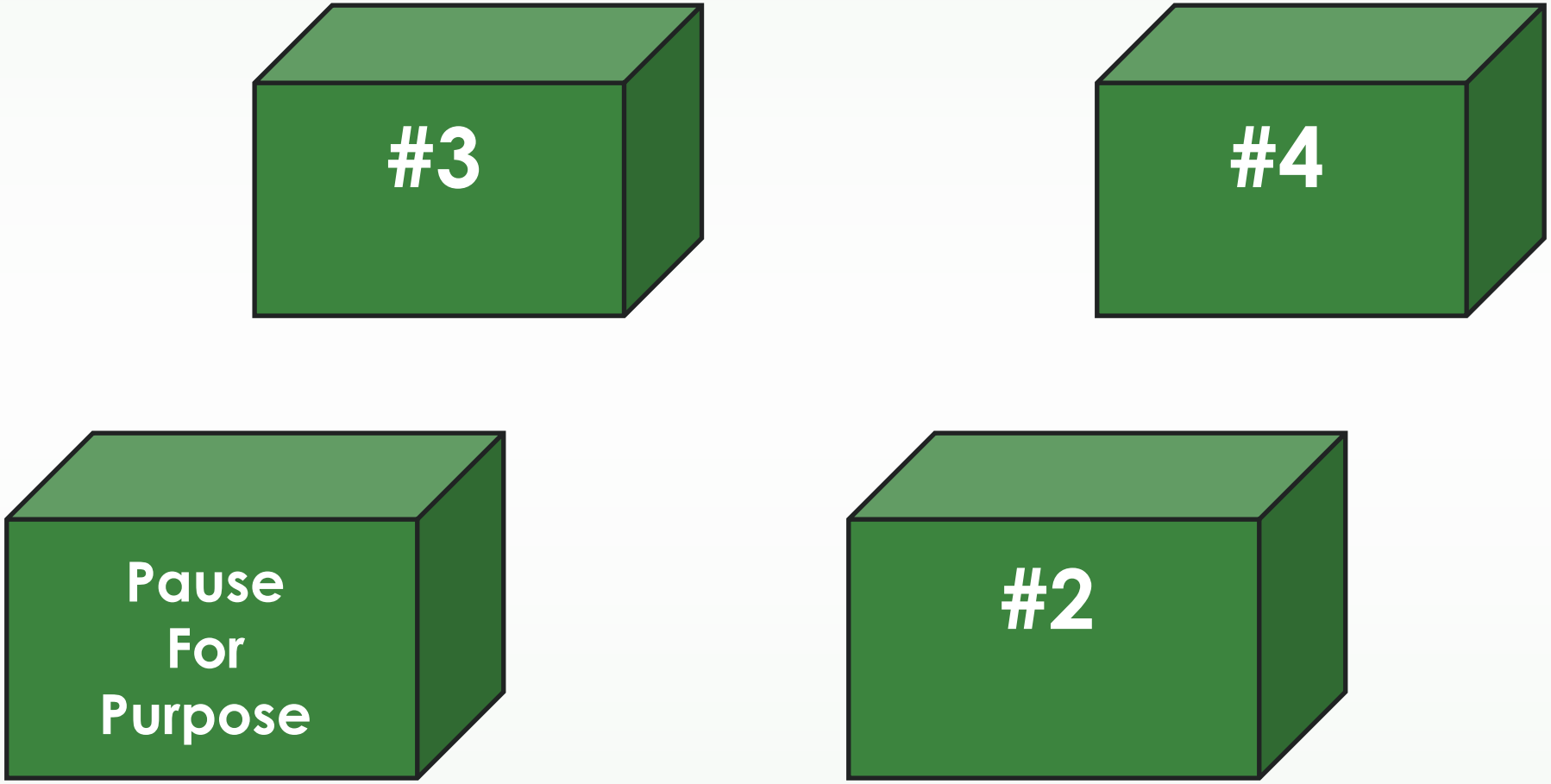
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Pause
For
Purpose
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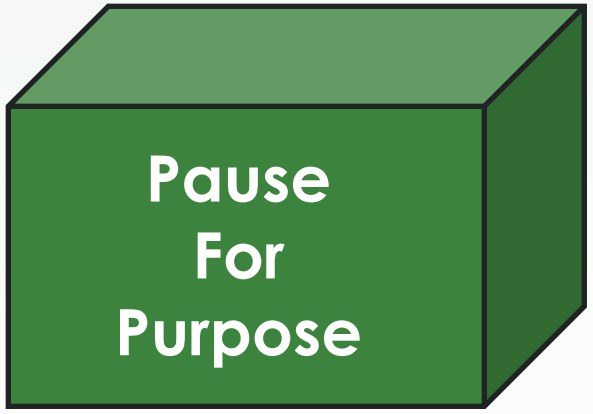
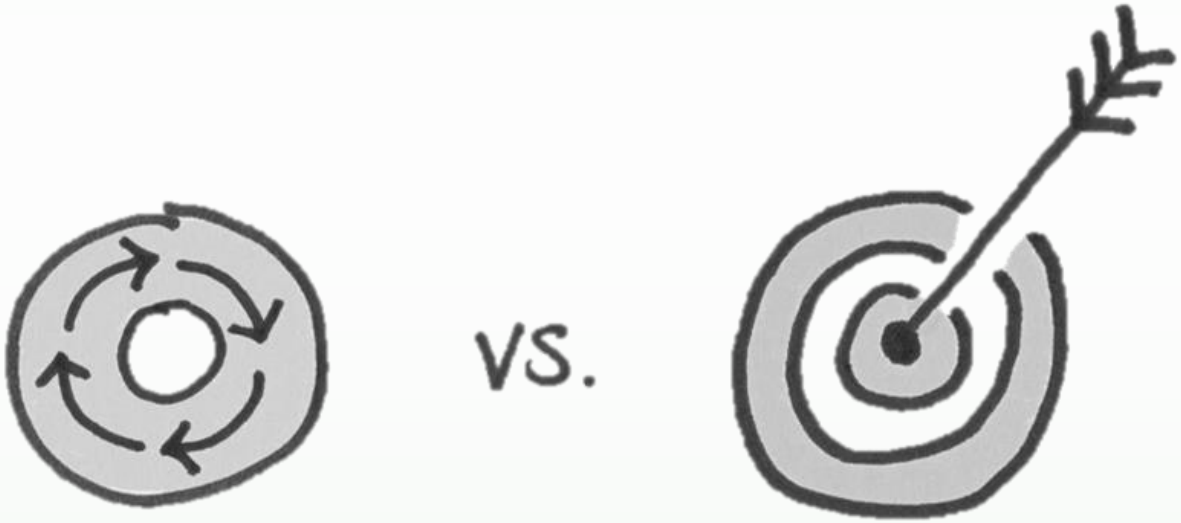
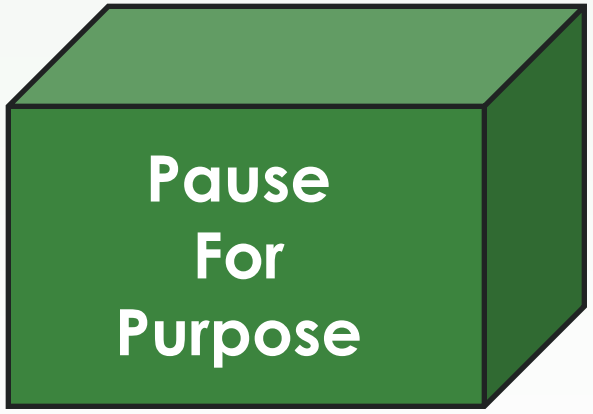


a) Set / identify goals

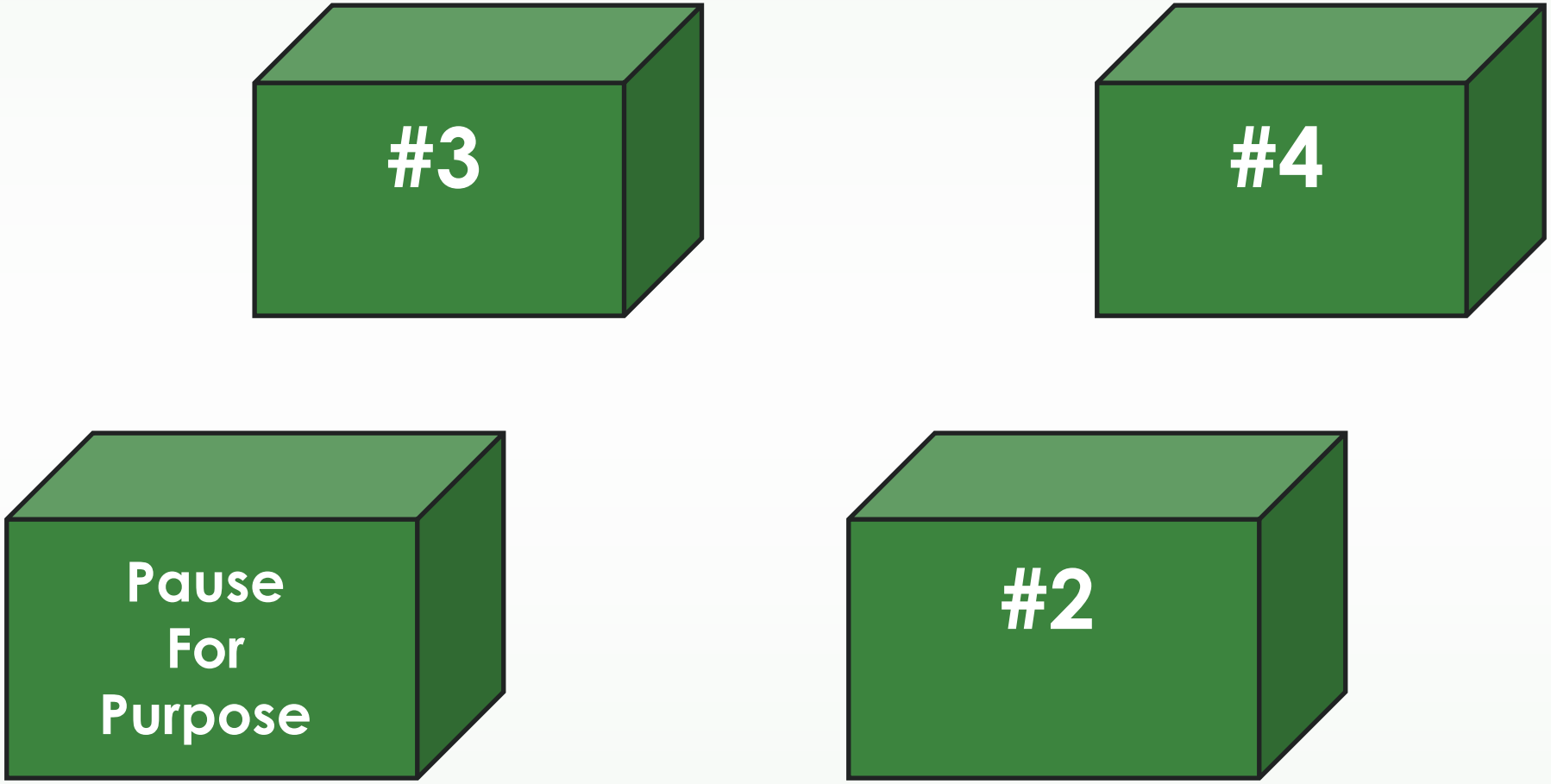
- What do you want to achieve?
- How does this relate to your strategic plan, grant objectives, etc.?





b) Call to action!

- What do you need your target audience to do?
- Clarify intent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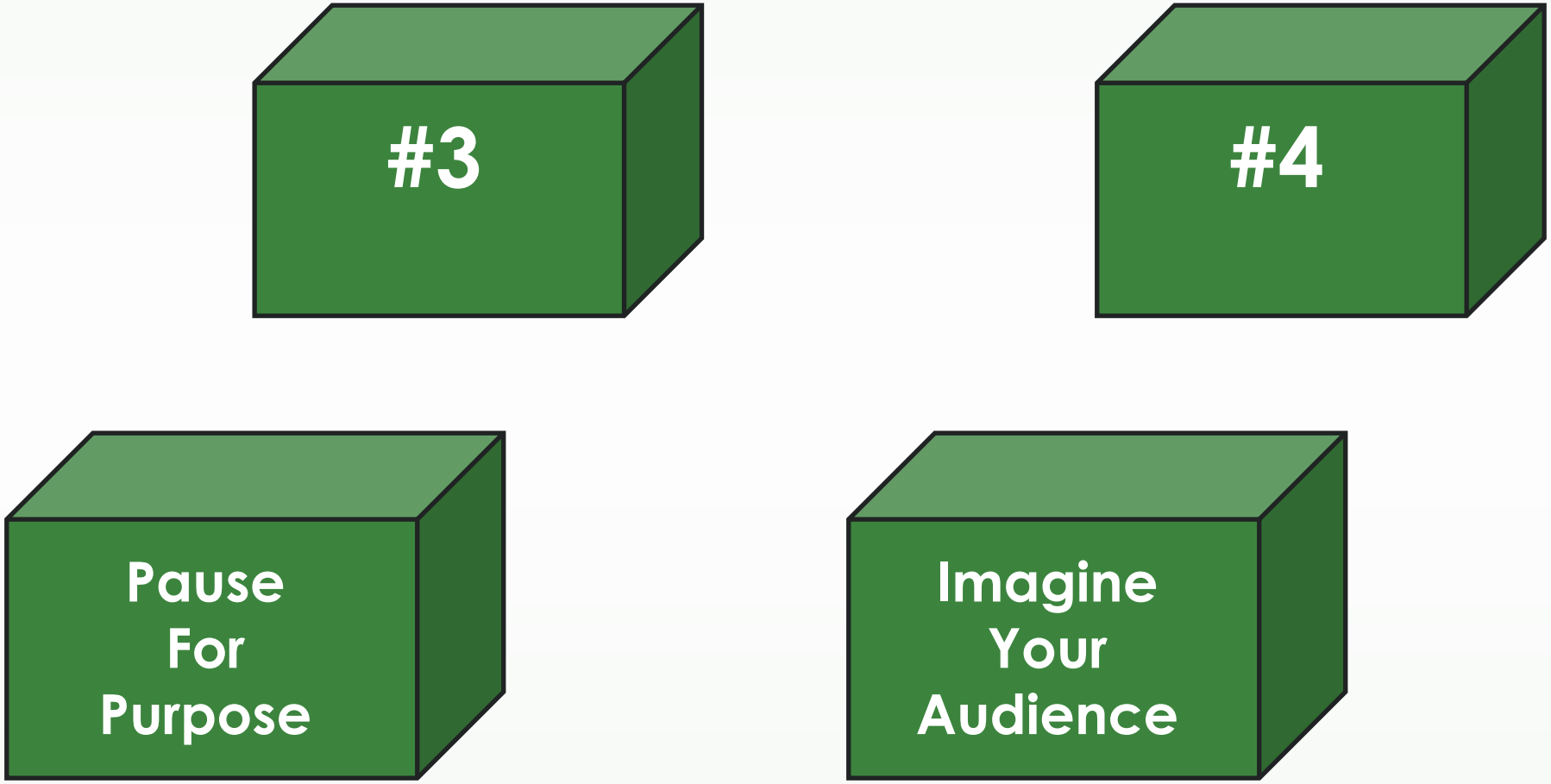
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Pause
For
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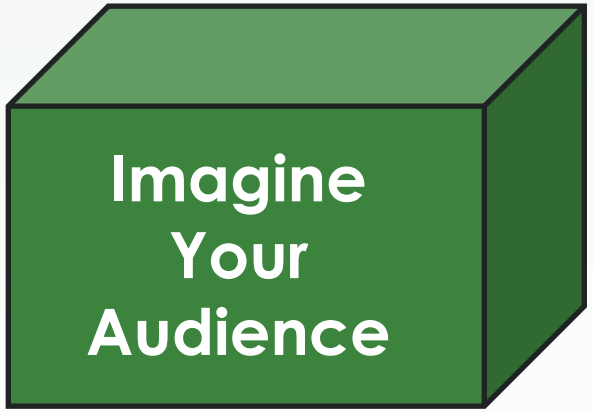
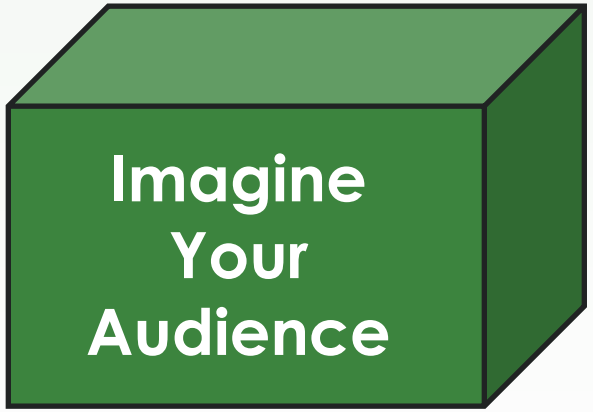
Imagine
Your
Audience



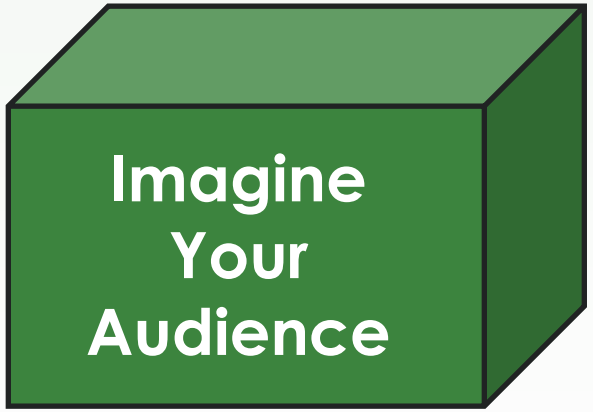
a) Research, research

- What do they value?
- What captures their attention?



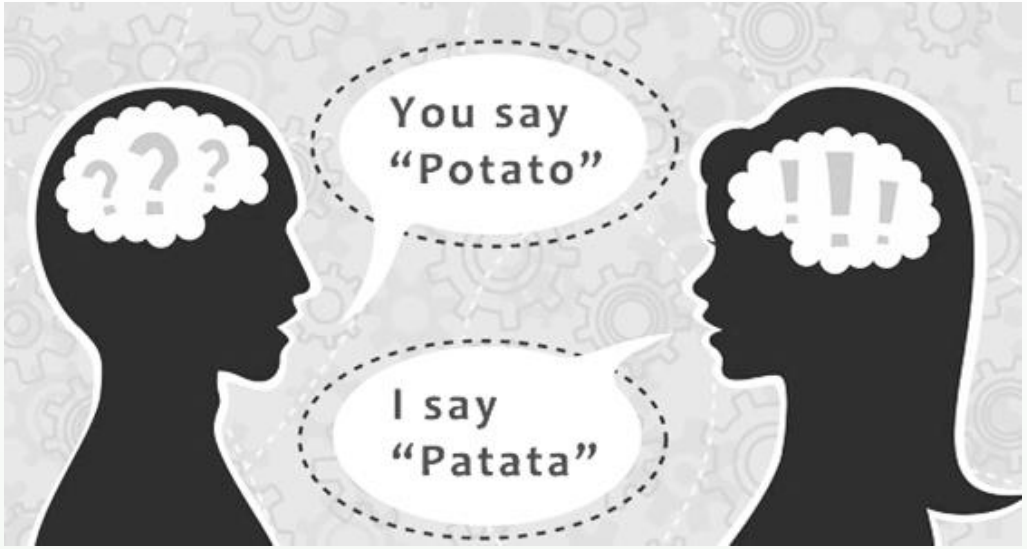
b) Who do they trust?

- Affiliations?
- Personal connections?



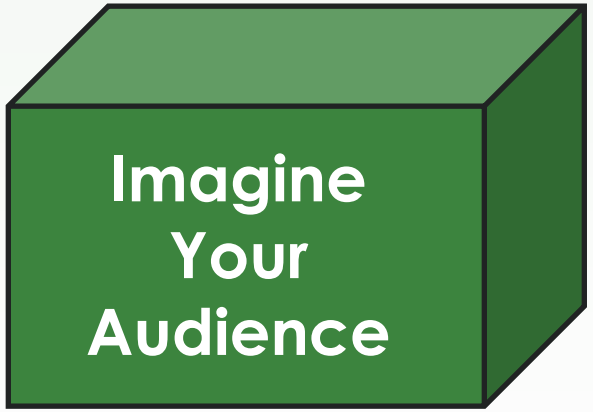
c) Speak the same language

- If they say potato, say potato
- Avoid acronyms, jargon, technical language (if they don't use it)



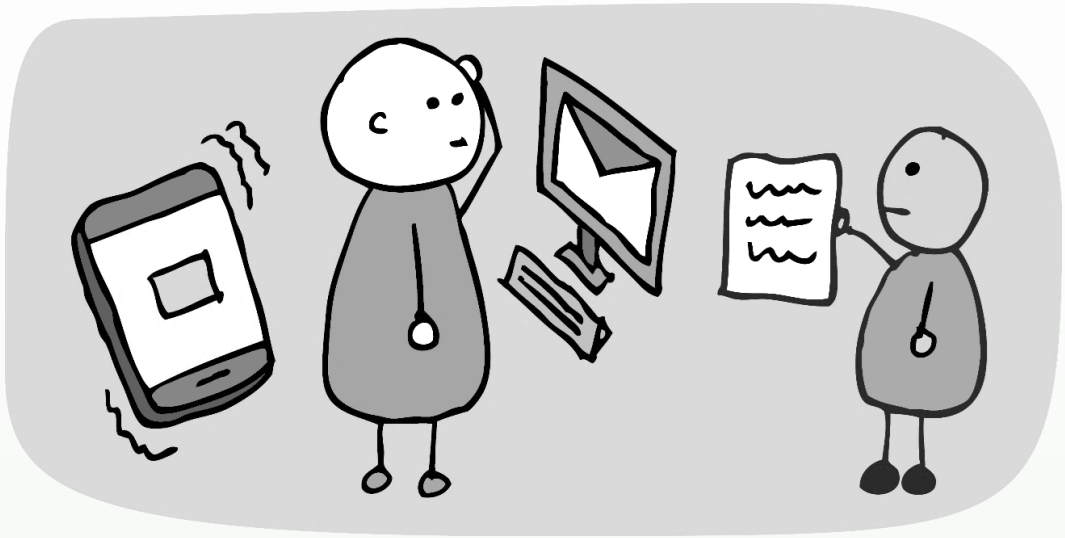
You had me at HELLO.
You lost me at I HATE STAR WARS.

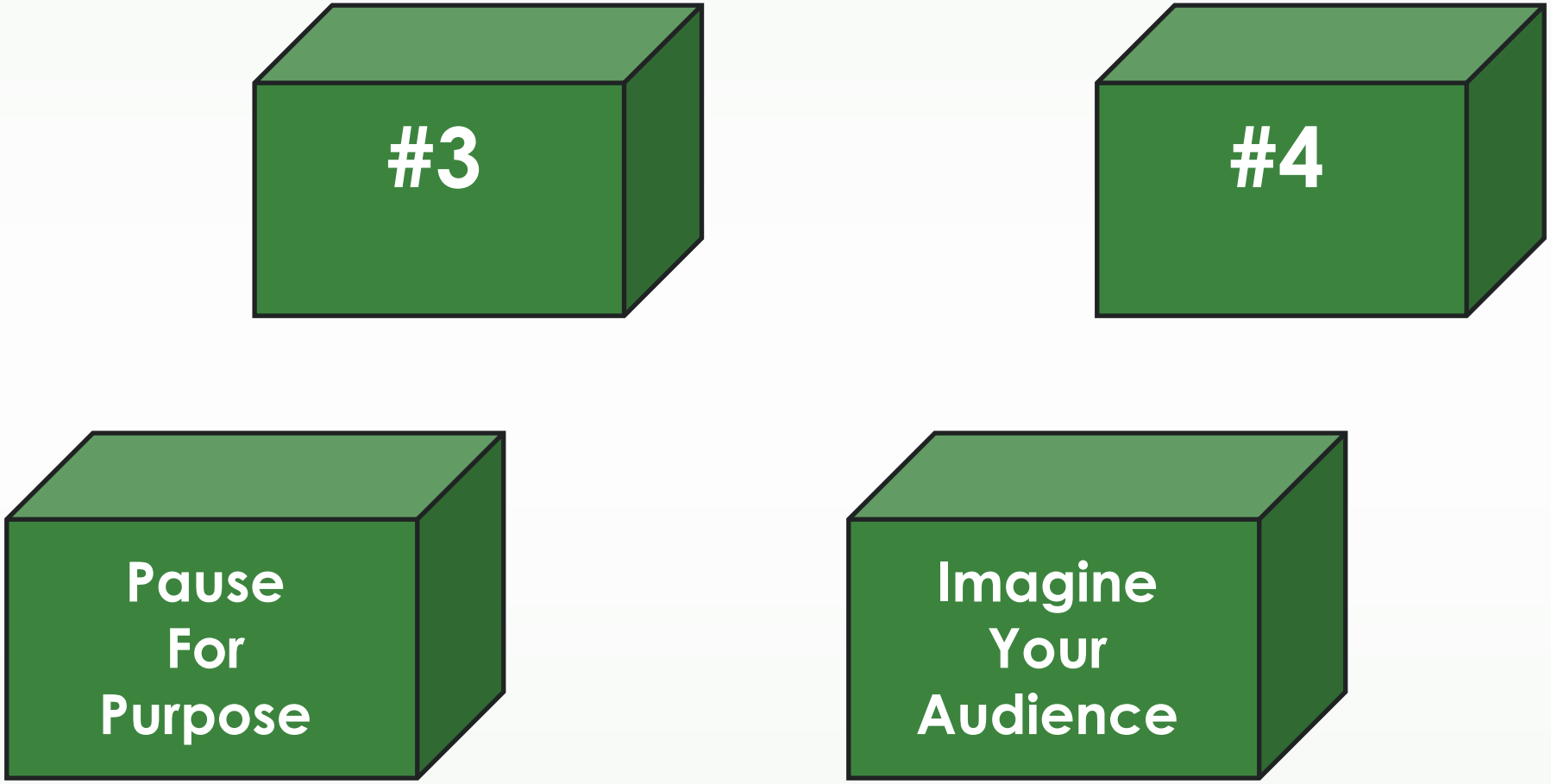
You had me at
CONSERVATION.
You lost me at
TA FOR THE
BMP THROUGH
RCPP.



d) Use their channels

- Connect and share based on their preferred method

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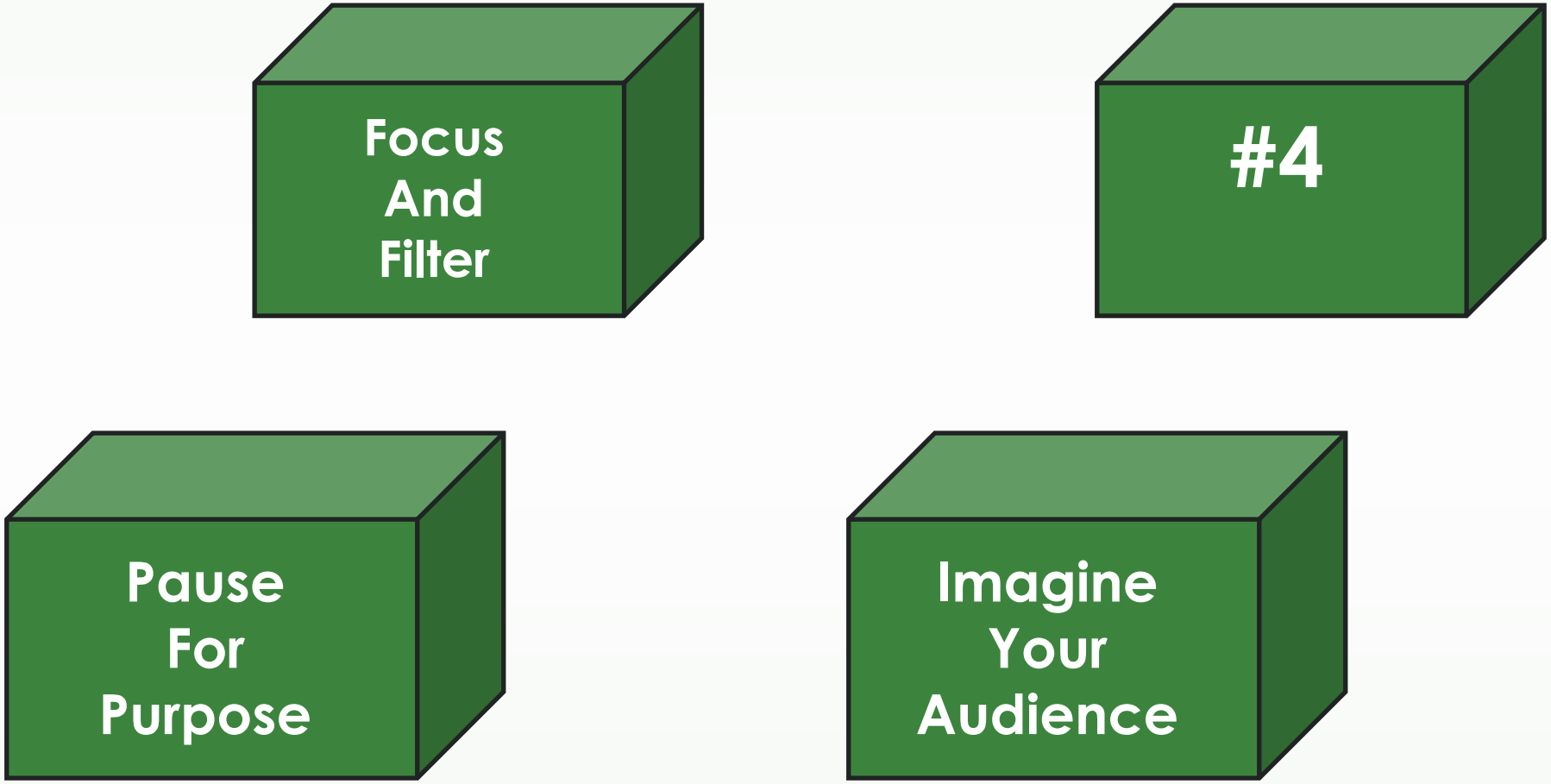
Focus
And
Filter
#4
Pause
For
Purpose
Imagine
Your
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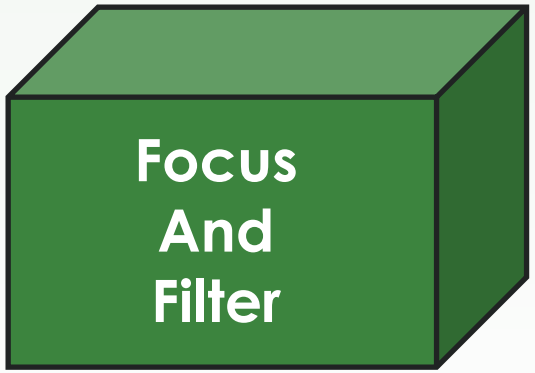
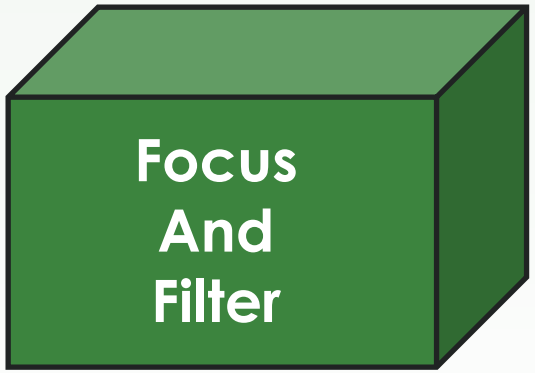


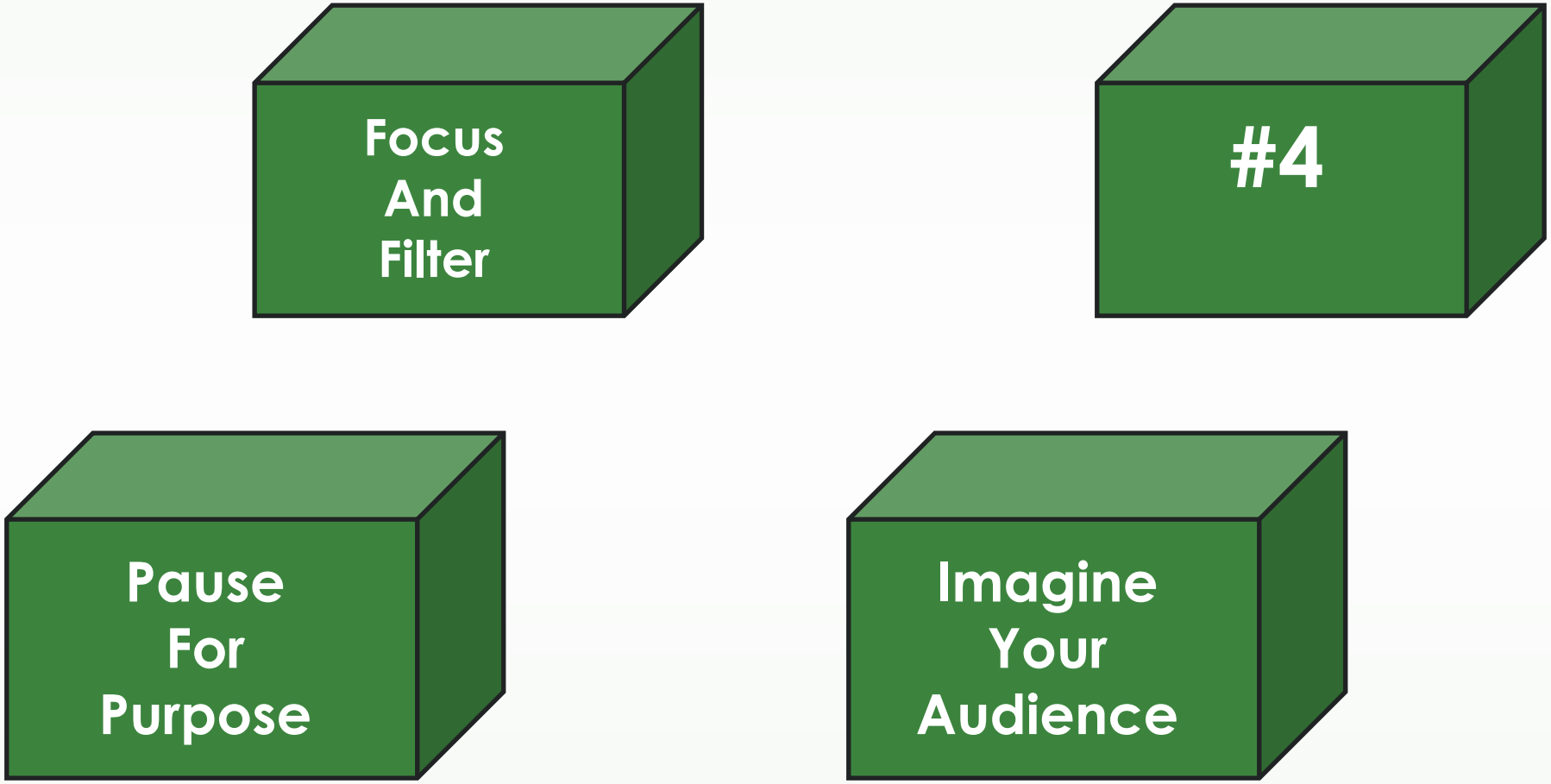
a) Set your reasons aside

- Make it about them
- Refer to research



b) Identify hurdles

- What may prevent them from the desired action?
- Any triggering topics / language to avoid?
- Potential solutions?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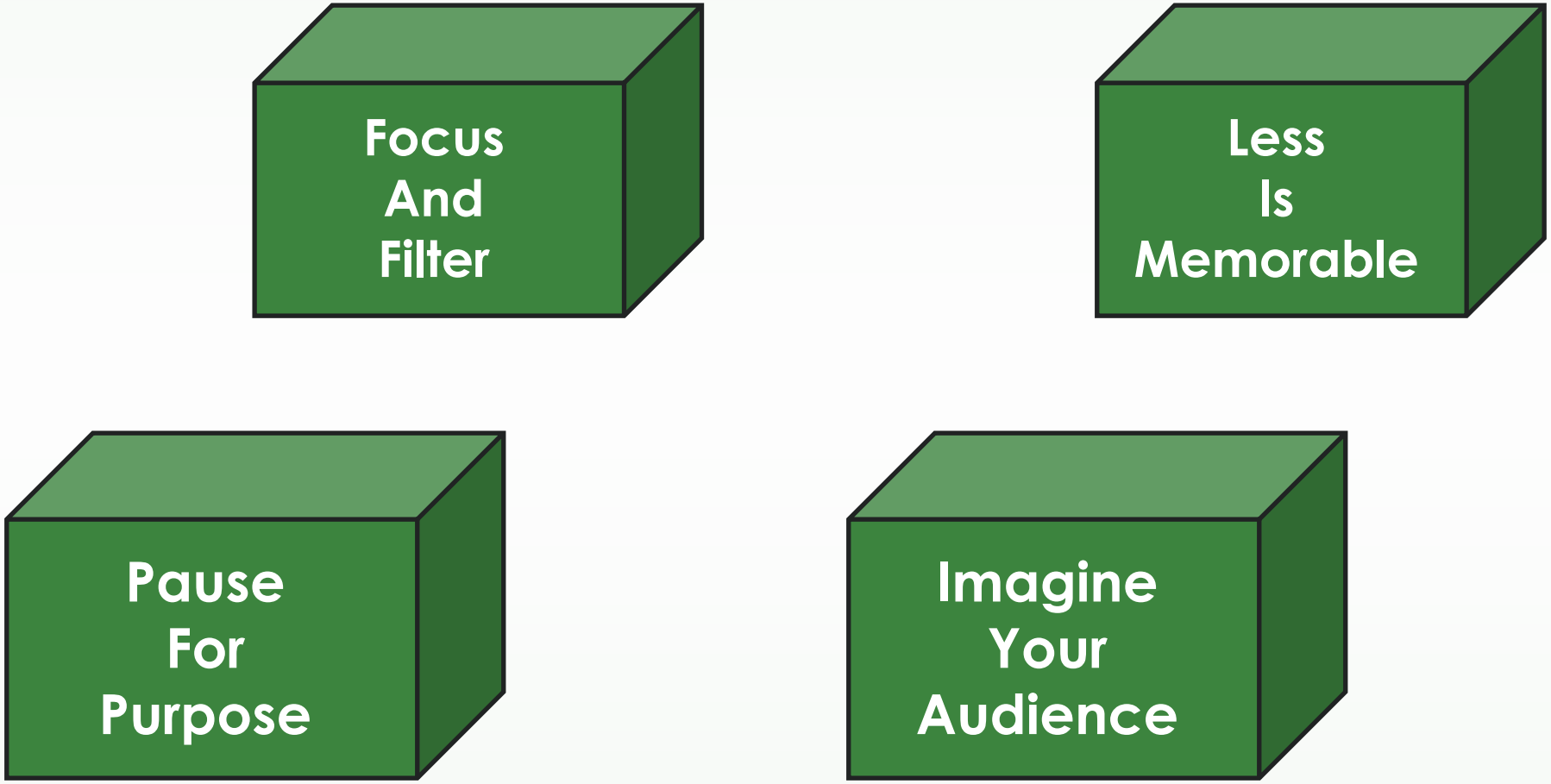
Focus
And
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Less
Is
Memorable
Pause
For
Purpose
Imagine
Your
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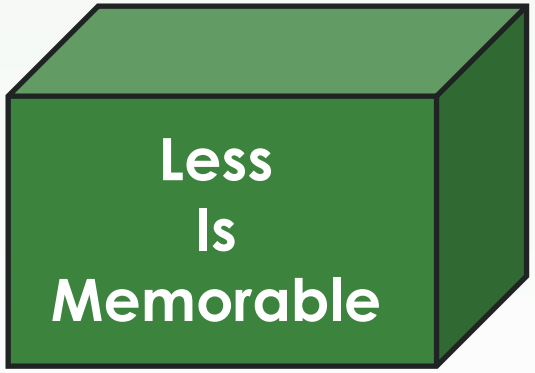
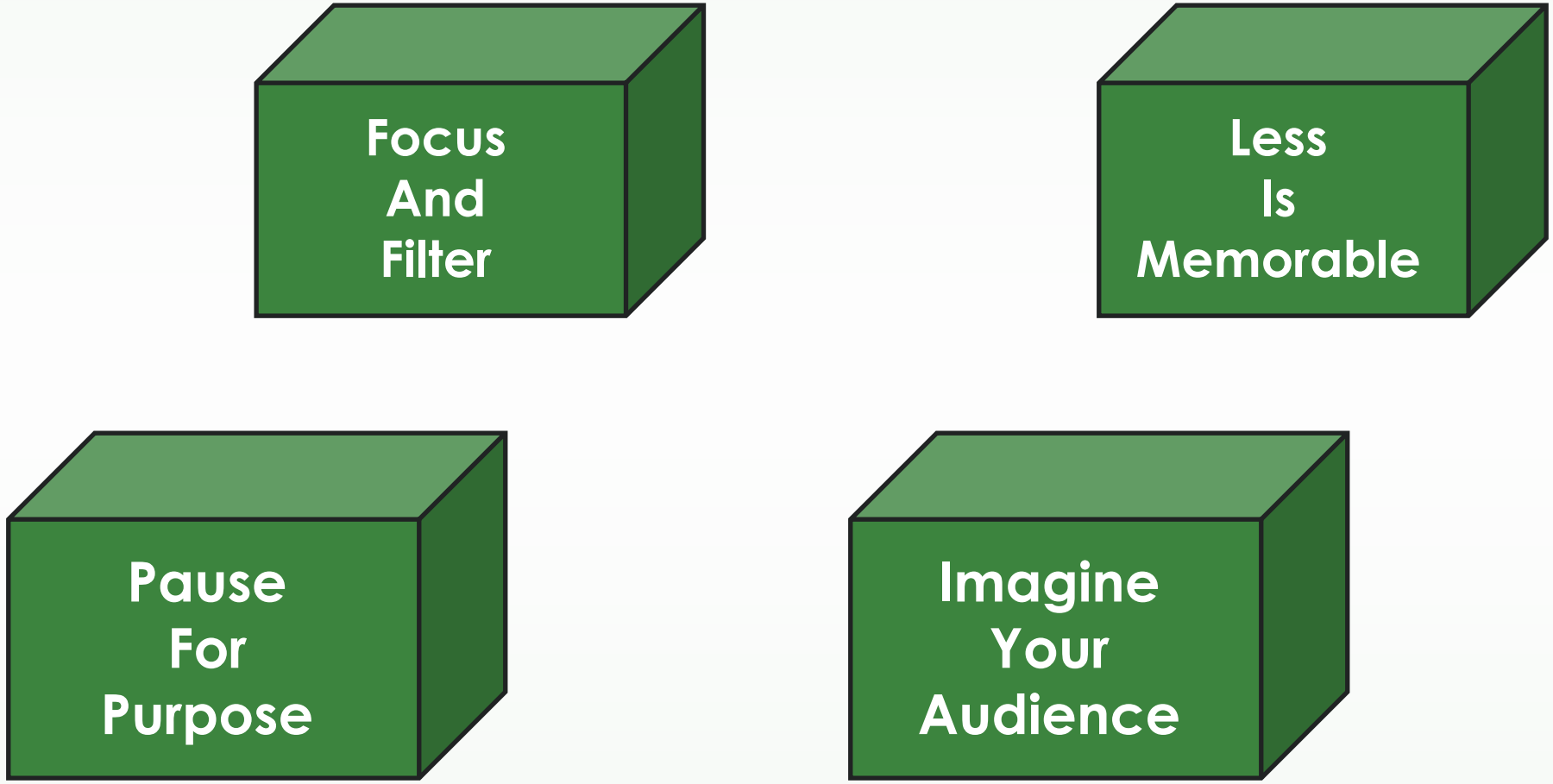


a) Keep it simple

- Simple writing / talk
- Simple data
- Simple photos

Putting cornerstones of connection to work…



I. Pause for Purpose		
Goal	Audience	Targeted action or behavior

II. Imagine Your Audience			
Audience interests, values, and experience:	Who do they trust, and/or how do they build trust?	What channels of information do they prefer?	Tech or non-tech language?

III. Focus and Filter		
How might the targeted action/behavior relate to your audience's interests or values?	What real or perceived barriers may prevent them from taking the action/behavior?	What solution(s) could help address or overcome those barriers?

IV. Less is Memorable *Using notes from sections I-III as a reference, what three key points will you highlight in your pitch to this audience to achieve the desired action/behavior?*		
Key Pt 1	Key Pt 2	Key Pt 3 *(proactively address potential barrier)*
Data, visual, example, or testimonial that supports Key Pt 1 AND could help establish trust / credibility	*Data, visual, example, or testimonial that supports Key Pt 2 AND could help establish trust / credibility*	*Data, visual, example, or testimonial that supports Key Pt 3 AND could help establish trust / credibility*

ACTIVITY

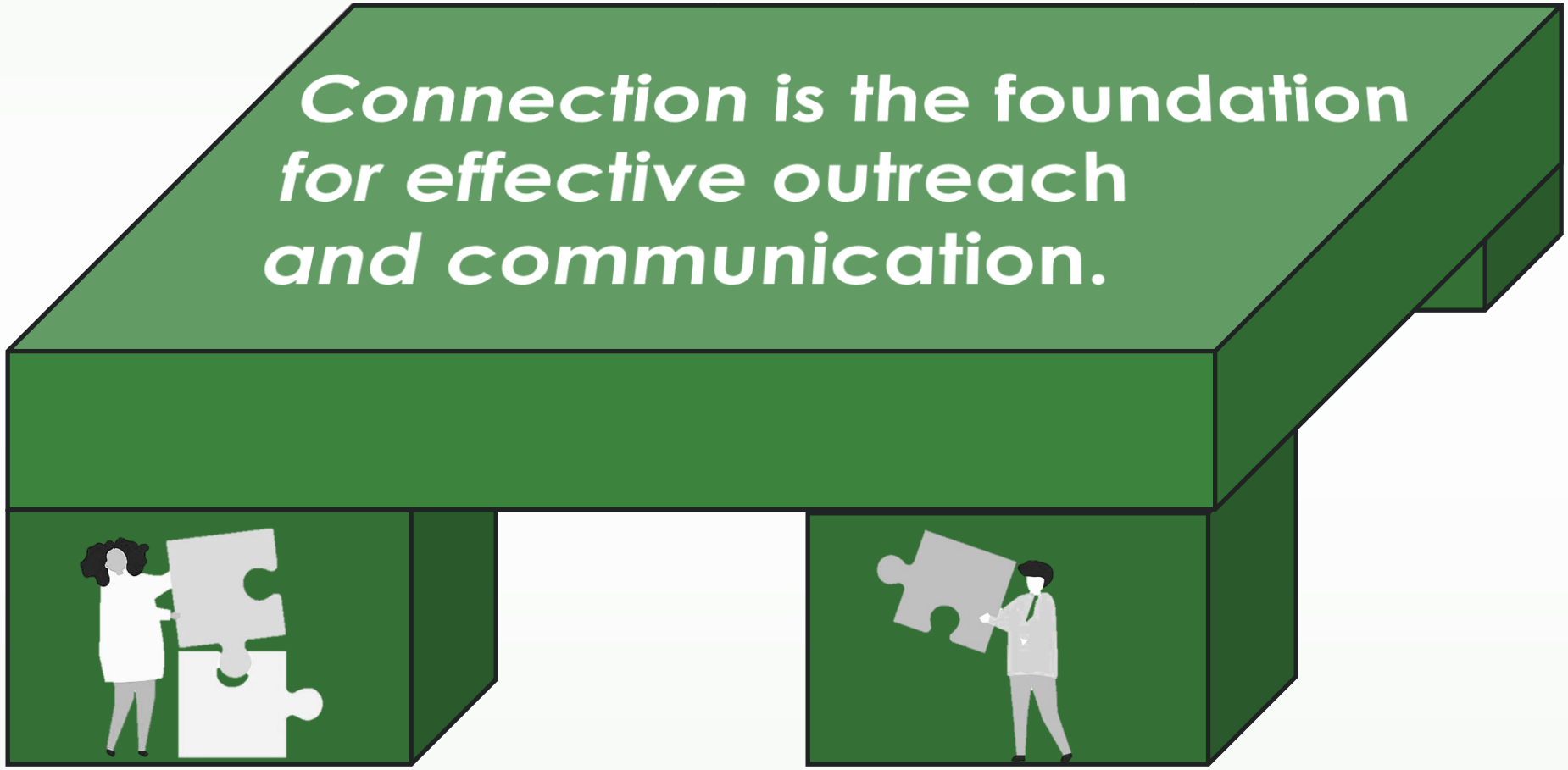
Use outreach plan worksheet to create **connection-based pitch** to achieve targeted action related to watershed project.

Instructions

1. **Break into groups of 3-4.** Review pre-filled sections of the outreach plan (Sections I: Pause for Purpose, and II: Imagine Your Audience).
2. **Complete Section III: Focus and Filter.** Refer to pre-filled sections of worksheet and use your imagination / knowledge of watershed projects to embellish details. – 10 min
3. **Complete Section IV: Less is Memorable.** Based on what you've learned about your audience, what three key points will you highlight in your pitch to your audience to achieve the desired action/behavior? – 15 min
4. **Designate spokesperson.** Who from your group will give a report out to the larger group about your scenario and pitch?

Sharing your scenario and pitch:

1. What was your Goal, Audience, and Targeted Action / Behavior? (from section 1 – Pause for Purpose)
2. What did you learn about your audience? (from section 2 – Imagine Your Audience)
3. How might your targeted action relate to audience values? What may be a potential barrier, and what's one solution that could address it? (from section 3 – Focus and Filter)
4. What three points will you highlight in your pitch?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for effective outreach
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CREATIVE STRATEGIES

It’s our job to make people care.

Get in Touch!

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206-658-5065

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